

the proposed means of implementation. Once standards have been agreed upon, then the means of implementation can be considered.

5. The group was in general agreement that point 7 on library governance is not satisfactory. It was their considered opinion that the proposal of the use of the academic department as a model of library organization is questionable.

The following letter from Mr. Alvin Skipsna, librarian of Skidmore College, was also directed to Mr. Forth and is reprinted with his permission at the request of the writer.

Dear Mr. Forth:

It is with dismay bordering on incredulity that I read in *CRL News*, February 1971, that "two master's degrees . . . shall be the minimal educational requirement for tenure for all librarians appointed after the adoption of these standards by the ACRL."^{*}

Far from being "truly a vote of confidence in the profession" as claimed by Beverly Johnson in the accompanying article, the proposed standards constitute an officially sanctioned declaration that librarianship is not in itself a profession. Curiously, Miss Johnson refers to fine arts and engineering faculties as examples of disciplines where "Ph.D. is not necessarily the terminal degree," but is seemingly oblivious to the fact that members of those professions are not out lobbying for the need of additional master's degrees. That dubious distinction is reserved for the inferiority complex-ridden library profession.

Pondering as to the reasons for this strange proposal, one cannot escape the impression that here is an outgrowth of local experiences in appeasing angry faculty gods. Miss Johnson's article reinforces that impression when she writes "we were able to gain the faculty's acceptance by offering (sic) as part of our 'credentials' . . . a second master's degree," and "In the California state colleges . . . ^{**} the success of the librarians' case with the faculty," etc., etc. Another how-we-did-it approach combined with a deplorable willingness to sell short the profession as a whole.

I hope that it is unnecessary to state that I am not arguing against additional degrees. A doctorate in library science has been and should continue to be important means of professional

advancement. Some large university systems require a second master's degree for appointment. Other institutions evaluate additional degrees in granting tenure and promotions, but to make such degrees a *condition* of tenure is pernicious. The clause that the requirement would apply only to "all librarians appointed after the adoption of these standards by ACRL" would still deprive in a cavalier fashion a substantial number of academic librarians of occupational mobility.

For the sake of perspective I would like to state that I am writing from an institution where librarians have faculty status. This includes a 9/10-month year, faculty rank and salary scale, as well as tenure, promotions, and sabbaticals. The library is considered a faculty department and the librarian functions as a departmental chairman. The principle has been established that the customary terminal degree for librarians is the M.L.S. This was achieved without any "offering."

What I am saying in a nutshell is that nobody will honor a profession that does not honor itself. Thank you.—*Alvin Skipsna.* ■■

GRANTING OF ACADEMIC STATUS

The Board of Regents of the University of Rhode Island approved a recommendation at its April 1 meeting that would give faculty status to University of Rhode Island librarians effective July 1.

The regents, in adopting the motion, agreed that several changes be made in the university manual. Like other university faculty members in teaching and research, librarians will be able to qualify for one of four ranks: professor in the library, associate professor, assistant professor, and assistant librarian.

Holding of academic rank, however, shall be independent of holding an administrative appointment in the library. To qualify for academic rank, a librarian must have been awarded an advanced degree in library science, a master's degree in a subject area discipline, or have equivalent professional experience.

Librarians who hold faculty rank shall receive salaries with other faculty members in the same rank and shall attain salary levels at least equivalent to the minimum for their ranks by July 1, 1973.

The recommendation was brought to the board by President Baum who approved a bill of the faculty senate. The senate had endorsed a report by its library committee last May 28 saying that librarians are an organic part of the university community and can best function when they are rightly recognized as professional members of the faculty. ■■

^{*} Revision in the Proposed Standards for Faculty Status.

^{**} Cf. ALA Report, "Status of California State College Librarians," *American Libraries* (Jan. 1970) which (commenting on the twenty-year struggle to achieve faculty status in the California state colleges) states that "among the states to which the nation customarily looks for educational leadership California is most backward in this respect [i.e. faculty status for librarians]."